



Docket No. MW001.02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: JAMES G. PRATHER Attorney Docket No. MW001.02
Serial No.: 10/055,816 Examiner: Unknown
Filing Date: January 22, 2002 Art Unit: 3618
For: MULTI-LEVEL PERSONAL HAND CART

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, DC 20231

Dear Sir:

Enclosed herewith, in accordance with 37 CFR 1.56, are copies of the documents listed in the accompanying INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT identified in the above-referenced application, or otherwise known to applicants, which are considered material to the examination and patentability of the above-identified application. Applicant respectfully requests that these references be considered in the examination of this application.

US Patent No. 6,271,755 issued to Prather et al. discloses a shopping cart having an anti-theft mechanism which includes a collapsible front suspension mounted between the side members of the cart base frame at the forward end thereof. The collapsible suspension includes a pair of casters and retractable pin elements carried by a support member, the pin elements being engagable with the side members of the base frame for maintaining the suspension in a operative mode where the casters engage a support surface. The support also includes a sensor operatively coupled to trigger means associated with the pin elements whereby when the sensor detects a triggering signal, an activation signal is transmitted to the pin means causing the latter to retract and the suspension to collapse. A second set of casters, attached to the front of the base frame and fixed at an acute angle to the longitudinal axis of the base frame, then engages the support surface whereby the cart is thereafter constrained to non-linear motion.

US Patent No. 6,127,927 issued to Durban discloses an anti-theft system for a shopping cart comprising at least one inhibitor disposed within one of the wheels of the cart and arranged to selectively engage and disengage a portion of the wheel to resist and allow rotational movement of the wheel. Trigger signal apparatus is disposed within the hub of the wheel for activating the inhibitor.

US Patent No. 6,126,181 issued to Ondrasik discloses a shopping cart which includes upper and lower baskets mounted to the frame of the cart, where the lower basket is mounted further forward on the frame than the upper basket, so that the two baskets are arranged in a stepped manner.

US Patent No. 6,125,972 issued to French et al. discloses a theft-detering apparatus for a shopping cart in which a braking mechanism is mounted to and adjacent at least one wheel of the cart. A locking device releasably locks the braking mechanism in a raised position, and is released by a trigger device in response to a signal from a buried cable which causes the braking mechanism to rotate into an operative position thereby stopping movement of the shopping cart.

US Patent No. 6,054,923 to Prather et al. discloses a shopping cart having an anti-theft mechanism including a collapsible front suspension assembly that is "triggered" by an activation signal emitted by a buried cable.

US Patent No. 6,037,869 to Lace discloses an anti-theft system for one rotating wheel of a shopping cart, wherein a rotation inhibitor is arranged within the wheel. The rotation inhibitor acts in a manner not unlike drum brakes on an automobile, except that the activating mechanism is an activation signal emitted by a buried cable that is transmitted to a receiver carried within the wheel of the cart.

US Patent No. D407,882 issued to Duchene discloses a shopping cart having a frame designed for supporting a pair of removable baskets, where the baskets are intended to be arranged one atop the other and spaced vertically from one another (note Figure 2).

US Patent No. 5,315,290 issued to Moreno et al. discloses a wheel immobilizing mechanism for preventing further motion of a shopping cart. The wheel immobilizing mechanism is disposed entirely within the wheel, and includes a signal receiving element for receipt of an external signal indicating the wheel has passed over or beyond an electronic boundary, electronic circuitry, and a solenoid which when energized drives its armature into an

opening in a non-rotating shaft supporting the wheel, thereby locking the wheel against rotation and immobilizing the cart.

US Patent No. 4,339,141 issued to Thiboutor discloses a collapsible folding shopping cart.

US Patent No. 4,185,848 issued to Holtz discloses a shopping cart possessing a collapsible or foldable basket, along with a collapsible handle.

US Patent No. 4,047,724 to Shaffer discloses a utility cart having front casters and a pair of stair-climbing wheels at the rear of the cart designed to facilitate movement of the cart up and down stairs. The frame of the cart is designed to support a plurality of baskets thereon at spaced vertical positions on the frame. The stair-climbing wheels are mounted to a second frame that is collapsibly secured to the cart frame.

US Patent No. 3,717,225 to Rashbaum et al. discloses an anti-theft device for a shopping cart including a wheel engaging locking bar which is driven into engagement with a cart wheel (acting as a braking element) by a piston driven actuator. A signal from a buried cable is used to trigger release of the piston.

It is believed that while these documents are relevant to the invention disclosed in the above-referenced application, none of them disclose or teach the novel features of the invention as distinctly recited in the claims filed with the application.

For example, none of these patents disclose or teach a personal utility cart having plural baskets disposed one atop another wherein the baskets can collapse against the frame of the cart into a compact, storable, package, and wherein the upper and lower baskets are each collapsible on their own, and when the cart is fully erected the package supporting volume within the baskets can be independently accessed.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of applicant,



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Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING PURSUANT TO 37 CFR 1.10

EXPRESS MAIL Post Office to Addressee Label No. EU378816143US

Date of deposit in US Postal Service: NOVEMBER 26, 2002

Sir:

I hereby certify that the following documents are being deposited with the United States Postal Service in accordance with 37 CFR 1.10 in an envelope bearing an "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Label, Label No. **EU378816143US** addressed to Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231:

1. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT with FORM PTO/SB/08A and copies of the twelve (12) US Patents noted on the FORM.
2. Pre-addressed, postage pre-paid postcard on which official stamp of the US Patent and Trademark Office is to be placed to show receipt of these documents.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of applicant,

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